

Testimony in Opposition to Raised Bill 1105

I am writing in opposition to Raised Bill 1105. First, this bill would allow behavior change procedures to be developed by unqualified persons, thus putting our most vulnerable citizens at risk of inadequate instruction and often leaving them, their peers, and teachers susceptible to injury by dangerous behaviors. Second, Raised Bill 1105 provides an allowance for Board Certified assistant Behavior Analysts (BCaBAs) to be supervised by individuals other than Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs); which runs contrary to the recommendation of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board.

Without proper intervention at an early age, very costly lifelong care is made more likely. This bill should be opposed primarily on the grounds that it robs children of the services they need to reach their potential as happy, productive members of society. However, it is also important to recognize that not providing services now will mean providing them later at a much, much higher cost.

Applied Behavior Analysis is not well known. Therefore, you may not know that we are a well-established scientific profession. Our experimental laboratory roots go back to the 1930s and the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis (our flagship journal) was begun in 1968. Over the decades, we have developed an empirical literature that is every bit as scientific as the hard sciences and the procedures we employ come directly from this literature. BCBAs are trained in how to evaluate experimental research. The Ethical Guidelines of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) indicates that BCBAs are to use only empirically supported procedures. As a result, we do not fall prey to the latest fads or snake oil that cost our children and the taxpayers dearly. We have empirically derived assessment procedures and interventions. We graph our results and make changes in a timely fashion. Few, if any, disciplines that address human affairs have as rigorous a scientific tradition. The bottom line is this: BCBAs have a unique set of skills that have been experimentally proven effective in applied settings and people without a BCBA almost never have these skills.

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